

# Hillandale

NEWS





# MECHANICAL MUSIC

Wednesday 6 November 1991



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# The HILLANDALE News

The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

Founded in 1919

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who recorded an arioso from "Mlada" (Rimsky-Korsakoff) - see page 291*

# A word from the Chairman

## A new venue for London meetings

The Society's October London Meeting is going to be something of a milestone in our history. For with that meeting the venue for the London meetings will shift from Bloomsbury to a new and permanent home at The National Sound Archive, Exhibition Road, South Kensington.

For many years we have endured the disruption of sirens and the noise of traffic speeding down Shaftesbury Avenue, and for as many years as I can recall we have considered alternative venues to the Bloomsbury location. The National Sound Archive is the correct and logical location for a Society such as ours, and our move there will help bring us closer to the national body responsible for the maintenance of our recorded heritage.

In order to accomplish this move, we have had to make adjustments to the structure of our meetings. The first and most important is the change from the third Tuesday **to the third Thursday** of each month. The starting time of the meetings remains at seven o'clock, but we will start at seven sharp as we have to be out of the building before nine.

The first meeting will take place at 7pm on Thursday 17th October. The speaker is your Chairman, who will speak on the Caruso Gramophone and Typewriter recordings of 1902 and 1904, using material derived from the written archives of EMI and other sources.

I do hope that members will continue to patronise our meetings. This change will I am sure do us nothing but good in the long run.

Peter Martland  
Chairman

Please note that material intended for inclusion in *Hillandale News* must reach the Editor not later than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.**

Hence the deadline for the December issue will be **15th October.**

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*Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor.*



# The Kiev Gramophone Records Factory

by Anatol I. Zhelezni

[translated by Mr. D. Ward]

Next to Petersburg and Moscow the third 'gramophone' capital was Kiev. Here in 1909 a branch of the Berlin firm "International" began to operate. The representative of this firm in Kiev, Henrich Ignatevich Indrzhishek organised regular recording of local singers, musicians and songwriters known at that time as well as performers of folksongs.

The Petersburg paper "Gramophone World" advertising the records of such large firms as The Gramophone Company, Syrena and Pathe Freres, contemptuously turned away such mediocrities from its pages. Yet in spite of such an assessment, records with the label "International Extra Record" completely captured the Kiev market in a short time and, encouraged by success, the firm decided to construct a gramophone record factory in Kiev.

In January 1911, on the outskirts of the city, in Shulyaka, No. 5, 2nd. County area, there took place the solemn laying of the foundation stone for the future factory. As is the custom in such cases, a glass capsule was sealed in the foundations containing a personal letter from H. I. Indrzhishek "for posterity".

The work progressed quickly, the construction was directed by the factory owner Ernst Hesse (well known too in the western-European record industry). However, on the night of 12th June a serious fire practically destroyed the almost-complete factory. In the fire there were destroyed most of the record matrices of the "International Extra Record", after which they had to release new records under the label "Artistotipiya". It appeared that the factory had not been insured and therefore the direct loss amounted to about 100,000 roubles.

After the fire Ernst Hesse lost interest in the factory and sold everything to his colleague H. I. Indrzhishek. The new owner, having a good knowledge of local projects and convinced therefore of success, rebuilt the factory and installed the latest German equipment. As a result the first "Artistotipiya" records manufactured in Kiev appeared towards the end of 1911, produced from the "International Extra Record" matrices saved from the fire.

At the same time the magazine "Record" was issued to advertise the production of the new gramophone factory. In the second half of 1912 the factory began to make its own records which were issued under the labels of "Extrafon" and "Artistotipiya". In 1913 the factory began to issue first-class 30cm double-sided "Artistotipiya" records. On the labels of these records, designed in the best taste, was printed a photo-portrait of the performer *[see illustration of an example, by Nina Koshitz, on front cover]*.

**ВЯЛЬЦЕВА УМЕРЛА,**  
но память о чудной артисткѣ  
никогда не умереть!!

Не говорите: умерла!

Она еще живетъ!

Пусть жертвенникъ разбитъ—  
огонь еще пылаетъ,

Пусть роза сорвана—  
она еще цвѣтетъ,

Пусть арфа сломана—  
аккордъ еще рыдаетъ!



Спеціальная пластинка посвященная памяти

**А. Д. ВЯЛЬЦЕВОЙ**

только въ репертуарѣ

**„ЭКСТРАФОНЪ“**

Кіевъ, Крещатикъ, 41.

Паровая Типо-Литографія М. Розенбергъ. Типетный. 41

An 'Extrafon' advertisement in "Gramophone World" showing an address at 41, Kreshchatik – a main shopping street in Kiev that still exists in fine condition.



To satisfy the ever growing demand for these splendid records the firm installed six more presses in the factory. Soon the "Gramophone World" was compelled to inform its subscribers that the "Record giant Artistotipiya could satisfy the most demanding taste".

At the "Extrafon Record" factory the talent included the most eminent Kiev singers such as P. Tsesevich, P. Slovtsov, L. Ennovyev, N. Filimonov, O. Kamionski, G. Bosse, M. Kurenko, O. Monska, P. Fainberg-Gorskaya and others. Stars included N. Koshitz, G. Baklanov, A. Kachenovski, M. Bocharov.

Of special interest are the entries for the outstanding Ukrainian composer, conductor and teacher, the renewer of Ukrainian classical music, Nikolaya Vitalyevich Lysenko, who produced a study in 1909, that was recorded in Kiev by "International Extra Record". Lysenko appears as the accompanist for the troupe of artists N. Sadovski Elen Petlyash. In all eleven such entries were made of which only six have been discovered.

Besides records the "Extrafon" factory produced several different models of gramophones.

When the war began in 1914 journals showed various warlike titles. From gramophone horns there flowed a variety of patriotic songs such as "Cossak Kryuchkov", "Bless the rifle, O Lord", "Let us join the struggle" and so forth. In the journal "Gramophone World" there appeared an article calling upon readers to boycott records from German firms. The paper wrote :

"Down with the records "Janus", "Beka", "Favorite", "Stella", "Metropol", "Odeon", "Lyrophon", "Dacapo".

Long live Great Russia and the Russian records "Sirena", "Russian joint Stock Company" and "Extrafon".

In one of the newspapers it was stated:

"In Kiev the manager Jacob Ivanovich Berkwitz [*whose portrait appears on the following page*] of the "Extrafon" factory was arrested.

Although an Austrian subject, he was able to prove his Slav ancestry and was left in Kiev."

One after another the gramophone factories closed. All the property of "Metropol" and "Stella" was transferred to the "Russian Joint Stock Company".

Under these conditions unexpectedly for many there emerged the Kiev factory "Extrafon" which began to play a more and more visible role in the Russian gramophone market. The factory owner G. I. Indrzhishek first thought of making a place for a patriotic repertoire. From the presses in an increasing flow there poured records with issues of the National Anthems of Allied Nations, marches and songs with a war theme.

The journal "Gramophone World" wrote with surprise :

"Previously people laughed at "Extrafon" and did not even take its competition into account, but now the firm is working brilliantly thanks to its great patriotic issues. G. I. Indrzhishek is a brave man!"

In spite of a serious deficit in raw materials, "Extrafon" was able to buy up a large share of shellac, which also played an essential role in raising the factory to the front rank.



Jacob Ivanovich Berkvitz, manager of the Extrafon factory



At this time the events of the Revolution closed the factory. In the middle 1920s a weights factory began to operate in the buildings of the former gramophone and records factory which business lasted until 22nd June 1941. In post-war years it was converted to a factory for slot-machines. At the time of reconstruction of the factory in 1966 the last building of the former "Extraphon" factory was demolished. During the work the letter of G. I. Indrzhishek which had been buried in the glass capsule was found and it was at once preserved in the factory museum as a reminder of past events.

{Editor's footnote : Kiev was long the third-largest city in the "Russian-Union" and its population now approaches four million}



An Artistotipiya label with three stars instead of a photograph when an un-named baritone recorded an extract from the 'death-scene' of "Boris Godunov" (Mussorgsky)

# Records in Store

Being a fuller version of the programme presented at  
the August 1990 Society meeting in Neasden by

**Frank Andrews**

## Part II

In Part I of "Records in Store" we traced the development of various stores chains' 'own brand' labels including Dollond & Company's Ludgate records, the Co-operative Societies' Unison, Unitas and – perhaps? – Jaycee records (as well as Sylvaphone gramophones), Catesby's Valkyrie records, Whiteley's Whiteley records and A. W. Gamage's Champion Gamage Records. In Part II we continue our survey with A. W. Gamage's

### A. W. Gamage Record

The A. W. Gamage Record bore a sea-green label printed in gold. It came in either a 10" size or a 10 1/4" size, the immediate source being the matrices used for the Guardsman Records of the Invicta Record Company Ltd. (founded by William A. Barraud, the brother of Francis, the painter of the "His Master's Voice" trade mark picture), Barraud's Guardsman Records following on from his Invicta Records were of 10" diameter. Consequent upon a break with his German suppliers, Barraud, for a time had recourse to the Grammavox Records of the Sound Recording Co., to keep up a supply of new Guardsman records whilst he re-organised. The 10" and 10 1/4" diameter stocks in use as Guardsman were at the Crystalate works in Kent when the A. W. Gamage records were put into production, which may have appeared in 1913. It is never easy to be able to date when sub-contracted records were put on the market, as they were very rarely advertised in the trade periodicals of the time.

The A. W. Gamage records were presumably numbered from no. 1? Number 89 is the highest catalogue number known at present. This label, too, appears to be another casualty of war-time for no post-war repertoire is known to be on the discs. A description of an A. W. Gamage sleeve wanted.

### Gamage

The 10" diameter Gamage record was produced from the post-Great War Homochord discs of The British Homophone Company, Ltd. which company, before it acquired Pathe Freres Pathephone's Stonebridge Park, N. W. 10 factory in 1928, had its records pressed by the



Universal Music Company, Ltd. at Hayes, Middlesex, having access not only to its own pre-war and post-war Homophone recordings but also to the Aeolian Company, Ltd.'s matrices which at one time or another included the Invicta Company's Guardsman and Citizen record matrices and American matrices imported by both the Aeolian Company and the Invicta Company. Presumably through the British Homophone Company, Gamage had access to such masters as were utilised by British Homophone ? Gamage discs also included Actuelle matrices of the Pathe Freres Pathophone, which were used on Homochord discs where the prefix to the catalogue numbers was the letter 'C', for Pathe also undertook the pressing of Homochords from around May 1924.

The Gamage label had a lilac background printed in a dark blue. The numbering began at G. 500 (or G. 501) with the Universal Music Company's pressings, but when the Pathe pressings began to appear on the Homochords, then the Gamage discs took a "GC" prefix to their numbers. That was simply following the policy for Homochords pressed by Pathe.

The 'G / GC' numbers ran into the G. 600 block, G. 690 being credited as the Gamage Dance Orchestra, a pseudonym for Leslie Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra. The sides were recorded in early 1925, so the matrices at the Universal Music Company's factory at Hayes were then the property of the new Vocalion Gramophone Company, Ltd. which had purchased the talking machine business of the Aeolian company, Ltd. at the turn of 1924 / 25. All details from Gamage discs will be welcome and does anyone have an accompanying sleeve ?

("Reminiscences of Wales" was played at Neasden, on A. W. Gamage record 56, credited to Imperial Military Band, which came from Guardsman record 398 with the same credit but, as the original Gramavox recording of 1911, the credit was the Gramavox Military Band.)

### **The Curry businesses, with Curry, Portland and Westport labelled discs**

Curry, like Dollond, of Dollond & Aitchison, is another business whose trading name has lasted over the years.

Henry Curry was born in Leicester in 1850 where he grew up in that city eventually marrying and fathering a number of children. During his early working life, in his spare time, he made fireguards, repaired mangles and built 'penny-farthing' bicycles in order to supplement his wages. His regular, low-paying job was with the Leicester Tricycle company, of which he was later appointed that company's manager.

In 1884 Starkey had invented the "Safety Bicycle" and that was the year when Henry, aged 34, decided to go into business on his own account as a full-time cycle manufacturer. In order to advertise his product, he positioned one of his "Best Built Cycles in Leicester" at the window of his front parlour. Four years later Dunlop had invented the pneumatic tyre.

Henry brought his son John into the business when he reached 17 years of age who, by then, was skilled at lathe turning. Soon afterwards a small workshop with a power engine was acquired and cycle production increased to twenty-five machines per week.

Another son, Edwin, entered the business when he was only twelve years old and he remained active with Curry's for the next sixty-three years. The Curry's business flourished to such an extent that a separate shop to store the bicycles became a necessity and Curry cycle Agencies began to be appointed.

Various sizes of competing businesses were acquired during the ensuing years, especially around the City of Coventry area. The Curry's business success was due to its fine products which Henry then controlled with the assistance of four of his sons. Son James had designed and constructed a motor-cycle which went into production as the Curry motor cycle. Son Edwin, by racing the Curry Bicycle successfully, greatly helped to increase the cycle sales.

With his fourth son reaching the age of 17, Henry senior converted the business into a partnership, a fifth son, Albert, then being only ten years old.

The Curry business was now a well-respected name within the trade and did much business with Miller Lamps, Blumel's accessories, Dunlop tyres, Messrs. Reynolds for chains and pedals and did business with Phillips, another cycle manufacturing company. The business was trading as H. Curry & Sons.

With its expansion of business larger premises were often required and wholesale depots were established. One was opened in Walford Street, Leicester where Messrs Rushbrook's were trading as competitors. Rushbrook's business was the foundation upon which the firm of "Halfords" was established; still a High Street name, like Curry's, to this day.

Although at some stage, Henry Curry, junior, with his family, moved to Swadlincote where he set up in business on his own account, in 1907 he took his business back into the partnership.

H. Curry & Sons was then described as "Manufacturers, Wholesalers and retailers". The retailing had been put under son Albert's managership and, at that date, was the most profitable branch of the business; his first depot had opened in Louth, Leicestershire which was an immediate success.

Curry's principal works were at Belgrave Gate in Leicester City, in premises which had been acquired for £1,000 in 1905.

More Depots were opened in King's Lynn, Boston and Mansfield, making a total of six when one includes the Swadlincote and Leicester City branches.

A portent of things to come for the cycle Depots was the introduction of the "Genuine Edison-Bell Disc Records" of 10 1/4" diameter by the Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Company, Ltd. in 1908.

At the time when Henry Curry, senior retired in 1909, the partnership was trading under two names, as Henry Curry & Sons and as "The Belvoir Cycle Company" but by the time the Cycle Depots were stocking records, gramophones, needles and accessories in 1911, the latter business had been re-named "The Curry Cycle Company", which then had eight Depots distributed through the counties of Leicester, Lincoln and Suffolk. The Depots were also dealing in "Electrical Goods".

### **Curry British made Gramophone Records**

The above labelled discs, firstly of 10 1/4" diameter, later as 10" discs, were pressed with the Curry labels at the Glengall Road, Camberwell, "Edisonia Works" belonging to Messrs. J. E. Hough, Ltd. which had purchased the former Edison Bell business in April 1909.



Hough's matrices were in use on their "Bell Disc - Genuine Edison-Bell Gramophone Record" which were first pressed in the 10 1/4" size. Later, after the Hough company's subsidiary, The Winner Record Company, put "The Winner" records on sale in December 1911 to dealers, which were of 10" size, the discs pressed for Curry began to take the smaller size. The Bell Discs had their last issues in December 1912 and, at about the same time the continuing Velvet Faces had a reduction in size to 10".

Curry's labels were printed in gold on various coloured papers, the different colours appearing not to have any distinguishing features as regards repertoire or importance of the artistes. Besides the name style the labels also stated :- "Curry Cycle Co. - Depots in Many Towns - Made especially to our order by leading British Firms".

The reference to "Firms" is a little mystifying as only J. E. Hough, Ltd. were the only company involved with this type of Curry record.

The catalogue numbers began at no. 1. The highest numbered issue I am aware of is no. 319 which was derived from inner matrices issued in August 1915. When first sold the Curry discs cost 1s. 9d. (8.75p) each or in lots of three were at 5s 0d (25p) making them 1s. 8d. (8.33p) each. That was quite a saving for the original Bell Disc issues were at 2s. 6d. (12 1/2p) each.

(A side played at Neasden was Curry British Made Gramophone Record 207 - The Belgravia Quartet singing Stephen Foster's "The Old Folks at Home" from Velvet Face 1281 issued in March 1913)

### **Curry's British made Gramophones and Records**

Although the proprietor's name is not given with the above label I think it's safe to assume that this Curry disc was supplied to H. Curry & Sons, rather than Curry's Cycle Company. The records in this series, which again began at no. 1, were given a stone coloured or a pale yellow label, printed in black. Besides the name-style there was also printed as part of the label : "Every Record a Gem by World Famous Artists. - Pure, Sweet, Loud Tones."

It is difficult to determine exactly when this particular type of Curry disc was first issued but as the bulk of the discs were pressed from the Invicta Record Company, Ltd.'s masters and as number 5 had matrices on a Guardsman record issued about September 1918 then it is hardly likely that the Curry was available any earlier than that. But the earlier recorded repertoire of the Invicta Record Company was available to Curry, No. 6 being from circa September 1912!

("El Capitan" march by Sousa played by "The Guards Band" on Curry No. 5 was played, a pressing from Guardsman matrix of the Band of H. M. Scots Guards)

The Invicta Record Company's masters appear to have been in use for this series at least until the close of 1921 for no. 109 had titles on current release, circa November of that year.

Perhaps due to the exigencies of war-time conditions but, at present, we have no Curry issues with pressed labels for the years 1916 to (circa September) 1918. One label which did cover that period, and beyond, was :

### **Curry's British Made Portland Always Gives Satisfaction record**

- with stuck-on labels. The above label (to give it its full name) was printed in gold on a sky-blue label and is invariably found overstuck on pressed "The Winner" records. "Perfect in Tone and Reproduction" was also printed on the labels. No artists' names were given, simply the title and the words "Song" or "Band" or whatever other description would be apt.

The numbering system began at the 1,000 mark; 1123 is the highest number known to date. Those numbers are on over-labelled Winners which were issued between October 1914 and June 1919 and it is almost certain that this Portland type of Curry record was of Winners deleted from the catalogue and the stocks sold off by over-labelling. None are in the Winner catalogue complete up to and including July 1921.

Winner 3305, issued in June 1919, was one of the deletions, as 1123. Why did Curry's use the word "Portland" ? Did they have a branch of the business in Portland, Dorsetshire which contracted for the deleted Winner stock ? All were of 10" diameter.

(No. 1118 Duet - "He may be Old but he has Young Ideas", from Winner 3262 issued December 1918, was played, the anonymous artistes being Stanley Kirkby and Harry Hudson, who were appearing as comedy duettists in the Variety Theatres at the time)

Full details of this type of Curry/Portland records are required and any description of the envelopes used with them.

### **Curry's Ltd. British Made Gramophones & Records**

The above labelled records were of 10" diameter and had yellow labels printed in black, with a garland edging surround. Curry's had been stocking the Popular records of the Sound Recording company, Ltd. before the outbreak of World War One, which were pressed by the Crystalate Manufacturing Company, Ltd. at its Kent works. Curry's other connection with the works being their other stone-coloured or yellow labelled discs from Guardsman matrices also pressed by Crystalate.

In September 1922, the Sound Recording Company had terminated its "Ye Popular Records" and introduced its blue and gold labelled "Imperial Record", the lowest numbered of which were pressed from extant stocks of Grammavox, Popular, Bulldog and Olympic matrices with the Sound Recording Company's own recordings and American imported masters supplementing the first catalogues and subsequent issues. It was from that matrix stock that this new Curry label was pressed, still by the Crystalate works in Kent.

This new label also claimed : "Every Record a Gem by World-Famous Artists - Pure, Sweet, Loud Tones".

I am not sure of where the catalogue numbers began, probably 100 or 101, thus being a third use of that number range for Curry's different discs. No. 343 is the highest known as yet, from an Imperial issued in 1928.



During the period in which the already mentioned labels came into existence the Curry business, before the war had been stocking another make of discs beside the Popular and that was the Homophone / Homochord labels. They also had a brand name in "Triumph" for their own lines in gramophones and needles. At one time fourteen different models of Triumph machines were on offer, prices ranging from 15s. 6d. (77 1/2p) to £5. 15s. (£5.75).

A special line in needles was the "Magnetic" needle which would play three records each but cost three times as much as a box of 200 Triumph needles. Triumph Records, of which two quite different labels have been seen although both depict a Butterfly, have not yet been found to be connected with Curry's, and they are unlikely to be so as the Curry name is absent from the labels. "Triumph" was used as a pseudonym on some of the second Curry labels in "Triumph Dance Orchestra".

By 1914 The Curry Cycle Company had 32 Depots which were invariably sited near a railway station and, in 1914, more depots were opened in Gainsborough, Dover, Lowestoft, Windsor and Bedford.

When Henry Curry senior died in 1916 it was said another twenty depots had opened since his retirement in 1909. From 1918 an average of eight new depots were opened every year until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939.

In 1918 Curry's opened a new factory in Marlow Road, Leicester City, which was able to cope with Curry's requirements until 1931. It was during 1918 that the head office of the business was moved from Leicester to Goswell Road, London, E. C.

Curry's Limited had been incorporated in May 1922 upon the amalgamation of Henry Curry & Sons with The Curry Cycle Company, hence the inclusion of the new company name on the discs pressed from the Imperial Records matrix stock.

(The example played at Neasden, Curry 213, "Seminola", played by Curry's Jazz Band, has an interesting background which was imparted to me by fellow member Arthur Badrock. It appears that the artistes are Lew Gold and His Orchestra, which was recorded by the American Pathe company and a mother was acquired by the Plaza Music Company USA for its Plaza Records in May 1925 and, through that company, a mother was sent to the Crystalate works in Kent, the Crystalate Manufacturing Company taking over all the Sound Recording Company's trade marks in July.

### **Westport - Curry's Value**

The above label was printed in black on post office red paper. "Currys Ltd." was printed at the top of the label upon a sphere of the world showing from Greenland to central Europe. Below was printed : "24 26 28 Goswell Road - Head Office - London E. C. 1." To the left, "Estab'd. 1884" and, to the right, "Over 100 Depots".

"Curry's Ltd." dates the label as post May 1922, and it appears to have been used both to press records which were currently available as Winner discs, Westport 2139 has its label pressed with the disc and is equivalent to Winner 3696 issued in August 1922. Others of these Westports are found with labels overstock on Winners, the highest known to me as a Winner, being 3881 issued in September 1923, the Curry numbered 2054.

It is not known in these instances whether or not the Westports were overstocked on deleted Winner discs or if over-sticking was a convenient method of supplying Currys Ltd. with its requirements ?

From the few numbers known the Westports may have been ordered at different times and have been given number blocks for each order, for we have numbers in the 300 range, the 2,000 range and the 3,000 range. The numbers do not show any distinctive separation of the repertoire involved, 391, 2139 and 3047 are the highest numbers known. Early recorded Winners on this Westport label were still included in the July 1921 Winner catalogue.

Arthur Badrock informs me that this label is also to be found overstocked on Imperial records. Full details of any red and black labelled Westports, and a description of any record bags would be welcome. Again a question has to be asked, why "Westport", after the very small town in County Mayo in the west of Ireland, or the town on the north-west coast of New Zealand's South Island ? Most unlikely !

### **Portland – Curry's Value**

This second Portland label was the exact design of the Westport label mentioned above in the same colours.

This type of Portland was also contemporary with the Westport in that it too was pressed with labels or had labels over-stuck on Winner recordings. An 8000 series of numbers was in use and pseudonyms were employed. H. West on 8021 turns out to be Stanley Kirkby on Winner 3661, which was issued in June 1922. It does really appear that the Portland and Westport discs were for a specialised Curry outlet. Winners of October 1924 are known on the Portlands.

The Curry business continued to flourish during the early nineteen-twenties, especially with its cycle trading .

In 1927 the business was floated as a public company with an authorised capital of £500,000, when it was reported to be enjoying extensive trading in motor car accessories, baby carriages, radios and components, sports goods and gramophones and accessories besides its original business in bicycles. The new company's name was Curry's (1927), Limited.

### **Portland Always Gives Satisfaction (Made Under British Patents)**

The above named discs were given lilac coloured labels with dark blue printing. The label additionally stated : "As Good as a Curry Cycle – Curry's (1927) Ltd. – A Record that provides endless pleasure".

The discs were put into a 9,000 catalogue series, and were electrically recorded with the Edison Bell "Winner" matrices as their source, the labels usually found stuck over original Winner issues may indicate that deletions from the Winner catalogue stocks were purchased by Curry's (1927) Ltd. Record 9001, over Winner 4487, had originally been a mid-October 1926 issue but was still in the Catalogue as at Oct. 1928 as was the Winner 4404 covered by Portland 9002. If those Portlands were deleted records they would have been well out of date by the time Curry's sold them, but it would put their availability as late as 1929.



Full details of all Curry, Westport and Portland discs are wanted and full details of their bags. I do not know if the yellow labelled Curry records ever carried the 1927 company's name nor if they or the earlier Westport and Portland labelled discs were ever sold with electrical recordings.

(No examples of the Westport or the second and third type of Portland records were played at the Neasden meeting.)

### **Curry Electrical Recording**

Curry Electrical Recording discs were nothing more than 10" diameter Piccadilly Records of the Piccadilly Records, Ltd. company overstocked with Curry's labels of that name.

Once again it is almost certain that these over-labelled discs were deletions from the Piccadilly Records catalogue, or were the remaindered stock when Piccadilly Records were withdrawn from the market in April 1932, having been on sale since November 1928.

The Curry labels in white printed in blue and gold, carried the same catalogue numbers as the Piccadilly labels with the same artists' credits. The discs had been pressed at the Mead Works, Gas House Lane, Hertford Town, where Piccadilly Records, Ltd. and Metropole Industries, Ltd. (formerly The Metropole Gramophone Company, Ltd.) shared the factory which had already had five pressing companies in occupation since its construction in 1912. Curry's are not known to have sold any other discs carrying their name since the demise of Piccadilly records.

(Piccadilly records were numbered from 100 and it was as a Curry Electrical Recording that it was played at Neasden. "You Can Tell Her Anything Under The Sun", sung by The Singing Rovers.)

### **John G. Graves & Co., Ltd. – Ariel Grand Record, Ariel Celebrity Record, Ariel Concert Record**

John G. Graves's business was largely conducted from large warehouses in Sheffield, Yorkshire. I am not aware if any of the buildings were operated as a department stores; most of the business was carried on through mail order, usually by the extended payment system.

In 1886, or thereabouts, John George Graves began selling various lines of merchandise under a seven days' approval scheme. On acceptance payments were to be made by the easy instalments system. For outright payment he offered cash discounts or bonuses.

A fanatically religious man, John Graves was President of "The St. John's Men" which met in a St. John's Chapel somewhere in Sheffield.

The bulk of his business being done through mail order by advertising in periodicals and national and local newspapers, Graves had already achieved an annual turn-over of £1 million plus by 1903. Naturally, some were not too prompt with their payments and Graves had no option but to have recourse to the law and caused summonses to be issued against

those lagging behind. In fact, in 1902 he had 7,000 or so actions against defaulters issued by the Sheffield County Court, 100 at least of those being against persons in his own Sheffield.

Graves had so many actions against those who owed him money that he and the County Court Registrar appointed special assistants to deal with the cases and days were set aside at the Court which were known as "Graves Days". Much time was also devoted in other courts in the country to dealing with his affairs. His name became somewhat of a laughing stock.

At different times his advertisements were devoted to jewellery, cutlery, silver plate, woollen goods, boots and shoes, tools and furniture. Graves had collecting agents countrywide. In 1903 he began stocking Columbia cylinder playing Graphophones and by 1909 was advertising his own "Coronaphone" gramophones with six "support" records. At one stage he began using the mark of a Bulldog's head within a circle with the words : "J. G. Graves' Trade Mark" printed in a cartouche below. The mark was never applied for official registration.

In November 1909 the Graves business published a talking machine catalogue. Gramophones were delivered to purchasers on receipt of a 2s. 6d. (12 1/2p) down payment with which was associated a selection of twenty records chosen from the catalogue.

J. G. Graves & Company Ltd. in March 1910, applied for the word "Ariel" to be registered as its trade mark, in Class 8, to cover for all talking machine commodities. This must have met with an "interference" as registration was not granted until some eighteen months later, in September 1911. Perhaps the "winged Ariels" surrounding the label was the bone of contention as the Gramophone Co., Ltd. already had a winged figure as its trade mark ?

How soon after registration Graves could offer the first of its Ariel labelled discs is not clear. In February 1912 Graves claimed to have a stock of 4,000 different titles with its stock of un-named records which were probably housed in the imposing building in Division Street, Sheffield, shown on some covers of its catalogues.

### **The Ariel Grand Records – (From Beka Records)**

Ariel Grand Records were probably named so as a first supplier of 10" discs to Graves' orders was the Beka Record Company whose 10" diameter discs were labelled Beka Grand Record. Beka Records of Germany had been acquired by Carl Lindstrom, A. G., of Berlin in 1910, which continued to trade in Britain through its London Agency managed by Otto Ruhl.

John Graves himself selected the repertoire he required for the Ariel Grand records by listening to examples from the current Beka catalogues and then ordering those sides he guessed would sell well.

The earliest advertisement I have found naming Ariel records is from November 1912, but taking into consideration that the trade mark was registered in September 1911 and that a stock of 4,000 titles was with Graves in February 1912, it is feasible to presume that Ariels could have been on sale for the beginning of the 1911 / 12 season in October 1911, yet, as there was no indication on the labels that the Ariel label had been registered it is possible that sales were made before registration.

The labels were of a brown or reddish brown paper printed in gold. Seven depictions of Ariel, the winged messenger, surrounded the label with an encircled monogram of J. G. G., or as J. G. G. at the six o'clock position.



Graves ordered and re-ordered from Beka over the years, as stocks needed to be replenished, and the catalogue numbers on Beka source Ariels vary accordingly. Some of the earliest variations to which I can give no chronological order were, Ariels without a common catalogue number, having the single-face-cum-matrix number of both sides as discs ordering numbers. These are also found with "K" prefixes. Any with "B" prefixes anybody? Catalogue numbers common to both sides range from no. 10 to 400 inclusive, these also found with a "K" prefix. All encompass Beka issues made between December 1905 and October 1911, except for Ariel G. R. 96 which was a late August 1912 issue of early Beka matrices.

A further sequence of Beka source Ariel Grands were numbered from 900 to 1198, the highest known, which although again contained some earlier Beka recordings, mainly encompassed those issued as Beka Grands between September 1911 and October 1914, most of the higher numbered discs being pressed at Carl Lindstrom (London), Ltd.'s works at Gas House Lane, Hertford Town.

One Ariel from Beka sources, which falls outside of the Ariel numbers just mentioned, was one numbered B. 550-I / B. 550-II with two 1905 matrices. Records numbered in the 500 range were usually from the Favorite records source.

The earlier Beka Ariels had "Recorded in England - Made in Berlin" on the labels or they had "Recorded in London - Reproduced in Prussia", the later issues included some with simply "Made in England".

#### **The Ariel Grand - Records (from Favorite records)**

The duplication of catalogue numbers was to be prevalent with Ariel Grand labels over the years. We have seen that the Beka source with common catalogue numbers reached 400 before going into the 900 series. The Favorite records source Ariel Grand records began at 400 being numbered through to 860, the highest number found as yet.

The labels, with the seven Ariels, were similar to the Beka source, except the legend at the bottom read: "Recorded in England - Made in Linden", Linden being a district of Hannover where Schallplatten Favorite had its factory.

The supply of Favorite sides as Ariel Grand records, chosen by Mr. Graves, probably took place at the same time as the Beka deliveries. Those Ariels encompassed Favorite recordings still in the catalogue which were first issued in November 1906. The last of this type of Ariel was from Favorite records issued in England in July 1913.

(Ariel Grand record 516, from Favorite 61 / 1 - 60013, of Joe Belmont whistling Mr. G. L. Copeland's "Intermezzo" was played at the Neasden meeting. No Beka source Ariel demonstrated.)

#### **The Ariel Grand - Records (from Jumbo records)**

A third early supplier of Ariel Grand records was Fonotipia Limited, whose Jumbo records were pressed both in Germany and in England, the latter at the Crystalate Manufacturing Company's works in Kent. Ariels from Jumbo matrices were numbered into a 1,500 series,

the highest known number being 2144, the first 500 or so having already been out as sides on Jumbo records issued between September 1908 to October 1911, by which time Fonotipia, Limited was already a subsidiary of Carl Lindstrom, A. G. of Germany. The German pressed Ariel Grands from Jumbos were either pressed at the International Talking Machine Company G. m. b. H. works in Berlin or were pressed under contract by one of the few German firms who were in business supplying the industry. Ariel Grand 2122 was pressed from masters used for a Jumbo Record issued in August 1913 and July 1913. No Jumbo repertoire post August 1913 is known on Ariel Grand records.

The labels were similar to the Beka and Favorite records sources Ariels, the legend at the bottoms reading either "Recorded in London – Reproduced in Prussia" or "Made in England".

### **The Ariel Grand – Records (from Polyphonmusikwerke A. G. matrices)**

The fourth German supplier of Ariel Grand records was the Polyphonmusikwerke A. G. of Leipzig, whose own discs in Britain were first sold as Polyphon records, then supplied to a fresh agency as Klingsor records, reverted to Polyphon records and finally had the name changed to Pilot Record. Very few of the Ariels from this source are known and it is expected that the label would have been similar to those on the other early sources, with the exception of the "recorded in" and where made legends at the bottom of the label. Confirmation is sought.

The records were numbered into a 3,000 or 3,100 series, the highest known being 3291; the Polyphonwerke's own issues covering the period June 1911 to March 1913 with those known to be a source of Ariel Grand records. All of the Polyphonwerke source were absent from the June 1914 catalogue, whereas that still contained many of the original Beka, Jumbo and Favorite source Ariels. (Examples of Jumbo and Polyphone Ariels were not played at Neasden)

### **The Ariel Grand records (from Grammavox records)**

Grammavox records were made in a 10 1/4" diameter size and were designed to play at 79 rpm. The labels were similar on the Ariel Grand records pressed from this source excepting that the hyphen between "Grand" and "Record" was replaced by a period or full stop and the legend around the bottom of the label read : "Made Entirely in England Throughout All Processes". The Grammavox records belonging to The Sound Recording Company Ltd. of Swallow Street, Piccadilly, London, W. were pressed by either J. E. Hough, Ltd. at the Edison Bell works or the Crystalate Company's factories in Kent.

The Sound Recording Company source for the Ariel discs was given a 4,000 catalogue series and when the Swallow Street company introduced its Popular records in September 1913 their masters were also employed to press the Ariels in its 4,000 series, the highest traced to date being 4638 from two Populars, one side being from P. 1131 the other side not traced except it was later used for Imperial 992. P. 1131 was a mid-1921 Popular Record issue as "Ye Popular".

Many of the lowest numbered Populars were simply over-labelled or re-pressed Grammavox issues of 10 1/4" with newly recorded Populars being of a standard 10" size.



It is not known when the Grammavox source Ariels were first delivered to Graves & Company. The repertoire includes matrices which were in use at the time of the introduction of the Grammavox label to the market, circa July 1911 on the home market, although the label was known in parts of the British Empire for some time earlier. The sound Recording Company, Ltd. having had recording expeditions abroad in Africa and Eastern Europe since May 1910, and had been engaged in providing sound records to accompany cinematograph films in England.

Taking into account that Graves claimed 4,000 titles in stock, as at February 1912, it is possible that the Grammavox source Ariels formed a part of that stock, along with the Beka, Favorite, Jumbo and Polyphon source Ariels. By January 1914 Graves were estimated to be selling 600,000 records per year.

The 4,000 series had reached number 4289 by the time the June 1914 catalogue was issued; that being a catalogue which carried records made from matrices which were issued on "own records" of the supplying companies in June 1914. BUT that catalogue did not include any numbers below 4124, although those numbers were used by Graves on their Ariels pressed from the Sound Recording Company matrices. Some of those low numbers between 4,000 and 4,123 are to be found in the Society's reprinted catalogue which includes supplying companies own discs issued as late as May 1921. Among these lower numbered Ariels, besides recordings of post June 1914 appearing, there were also more recordings from 1911. In fact some had been cut already under the 4,100 and 4,200 range. For example, 4152, prior to June 1914, had a 92 matrix which was later issued on 4,002 whereas 4056 had a matrix dating from 1916.

This late employment of lower numbers after higher numbers had been used in the same series (and where the numbers have not been in use before) is almost unique to the Grammavox / Popular source Ariels.

(Ariel Grand 4235 was demonstrated. "Mr. Thomas Cat" - humorous two-step by Hall, played by the Ariel Full Military Band = Grammavox Military Band from A. 116)

The outbreak of the Great War of 1914 - 1918 appears to have caused the ending of any more Ariels being pressed from fresh Beka, Favorite and Jumbo records although the first two continued to be issued for some time before being terminated; the Jumbos continuously throughout the war. The Polyphon Musikwerke source was lost entirely being solely German pressed discs.

As Graves's Sound Recording Company's Ariels were depleted by sales fresh stocks were ordered, chosen from the latest catalogues and matrix stocks at the Crystalate works. Firstly came the lower numbered Ariels from 4,000 on and then subsequent ordering took the numbers up to 4638 or higher, as the different orders were fulfilled. Ariels in the 4,300 series would have been issued during the war period and the information about those is very scant. All had been deleted by the time the 1921 catalogue was printed.

Each time new orders were placed from the suppliers the repertoire chosen always covered not only the latest Sound Recording Co.'s recordings but many from the earliest years. In the later years and after the war, matrices used for Bulldog records belonging to the companies of that name, and Olympic records, belonging to Levy of Whitechapel, London E.,

whose Sound Recording company matrices were in the Crystalate works, were also called upon for the pressing of the Ariel Grand records.

There is a possibility that Ariels in the 4,300 range had some of their pressings from the Hertford Town factory.

### **Ariel Celebrity record (from Fonotipia Companies)**

At this point it will be well to emphasise that the numbering of the Ariel Grand records from all sources, to June 1914 had employed numbering from no. 10 to into the 4,100 range, without any second use of any of the numbers except for No. 400. The progression of number blocks continued during the war with the introduction of a 5,000 series and a 6,000 series of catalogue numbers. These were applied to a new label of the J. G. Graves, Ltd.' business. Ariel Celebrity records, were without the surrounding seven Ariels on their labels and "Ariel" itself was printed in long-hand script. The 5000 series, it is assumed, had a more classical repertoire than the 6,000 series. The source was the Odeon 10 3/4" matrices held at Fonotipia Ltd.'s works at Hertford Town. The 5000 series were given a red and gold label, the 6,000 series a yellow and gold label.

John McCormack recordings appeared in both series. All were "Made in England", as the labels state, but it is not known when Graves took the first deliveries. All had gone from the Graves catalogue by May 1921. Details of all 5000 and 6000 Ariel Celebrity records will be welcome. As the production of new recordings under the Odeon label ceased almost with the outbreak of war in August 1914, the Ariel Celebrity records were chosen from the last Odeon catalogue to be issued in the U. K. All matrices at the Mead Works, Hertford Town passed to the new Hertford Record Company, Ltd. in 1917 and it may be that that company pressed some of the Ariel Celebrity Records.

(Ariel Celebrity 5050 played from Odeon 0218 McCormack "E lucevan e Stelle" -  
Tosca was played at the Neasden meeting)

### **Ariel Concert records (from Fonotipia, Ltd., Carl Lindstrom (London), Ltd. and The Hertford Record Company, Ltd.**

"Concert" applied to discs usually indicated a 10" diameter size. Ariel Concert records were of a 12" size. Graves appear not to have made use of a 7000 series of catalogue numbers for their Concert Records were put into an 8,000 series, which was divided into three blocks according to which of the suppliers' labels were being drawn upon.

Those in the 8000 / 8100 block were pressed from Carl Lindstrom (London), Ltd.'s Beka Meister records. Those in the 8400 block were from matrices held by the same company but which were formerly the product of the Favorite Schallplatten A. G. of Linden, and those discs in an 8600 series were from Fonotipia Ltd.'s Odeon matrices, formerly the property of The International Talking Machine Company, G. m. b. H. of Germany. Some of the Beka Meister matrices had only been used for the Scala De Luxe or the Scala Ideal Records of the Scala Record Company, Ltd. of London which always relied on the Beka matrices for its discs, pre-Great War.



Ariel Concert Records, only seen with violet and gold labels, as yet, bore a similar label to the Ariel Celebrity labels except in lieu of the word "Concert" for "Celebrity". The Hertford Record Company, Ltd. did manufacture Ariel Concert Records at Hertford Town; eighty-seven of the issues are still listed in the May 1921 Ariel catalogue.

(Ariel Concert 8028 was played from Beka Meister M. 61 Pilgrims Chorus as by Ariel Concert Band)

To be continued

## Letters

Dear Editor,

I wondered if any British readers could help and find answers to questions concerning the following automatic phonograph.

On the 6th of February 1906 Clarence Vogt, an American citizen living in Berlin, filed a patent application covering a multi selection disc phonograph for coin operation. The patent was granted on the 6th August 1912 but Vogt had by then assigned it to The Gramophone & Typewriter, Ltd. of London.

Is it possible to find out whether the model had a name in Britain? It was surely an unusual gramophone with automatic needle changer, disc frames (later known from Wurlitzer Simplex mechanisms) and of course a coin feed mechanism. The whole mechanism could be viewed from the top.

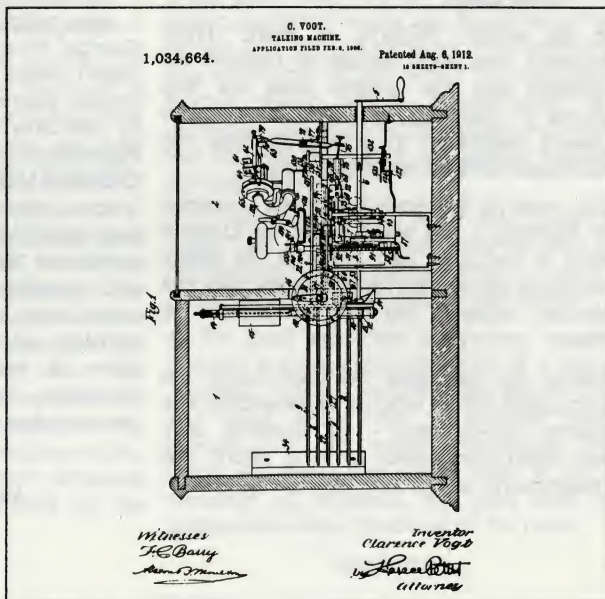
I know several other coin operated American multi selection disc or cylinder phonographs from the same period, but in Europe most

coin operated phonographs were semi-automatic (Ramophone, Polydor, Perfectaphone etc.) and only a few were multi selection (eg. Bussoz, Giacardi).

Hence any information on this interesting machine would be most welcome,

Yours sincerely,

Gert Almind, Mundelstrup, Denmark



Dear Editor,

In my letter published in the Hillandale News's last edition I stated that Columbia, in America, withdrew from its association with the Indestructible Records made at Albany, N. Y. in 1910. Allen Koenigsberg has pointed out to me that this should be 1912, the year which both Deakins and Carter give, and since the receipt of Allen's correction I find so in my own file made up many years ago! "Columbia" must have been dropped from the records, as sold in the U. K., in May 1910 for another reason, the most likely being that Columbia in Britain, which had nothing to do with the recording, selling or advertising of the Indestructibles, were embarrassed by the orders and enquiries and other correspondence which they must have been receiving due to the fact that John G. Murdoch & Co., Ltd. advertised the records as Columbia Indestructibles from the time they took on the concession in 1909. I cannot be correct all the time, but I try!

Yours sincerely,

Frank Andrews, Neasden, London

Dear Editor,

In his article "Records in Store" Frank Andrews was good enough to mention my research into the Ludgate label but was wrong in crediting me with "a piece of brilliant deduction" in unravelling how the catalogue numbers were allocated.

The credit for that goes to Michael Landridge of Worthing. I first wrote about the Ludgate label in the June 1963 issue of the Matrix magazine but it wasn't until January 1989 that Michael wrote to me and put forward his theory.

Initially the catalogue numbers follow the composers on the records alphabetically. Our lowest known issue - 53, consists of a two-sided composition by K. J. Alford. 355 (Beethoven), 989 (Coleridge-Taylor), 1834

(Elgar), 2887 (Kern), 3401 (Mascagni), 4368 (Rossini), 4740 (Sibelius) and so on up to 5853 (Youmans). One or two oddities are included in the alphabetical sequence such as 811 (Christmas *Carols*) and 2743 (Irish). After the composers' sequence came a block of Military Band recordings (around 5900), then the dance band records arranged in One-Steps, Foxtrots and Waltzes (from approximately 6000 to 6200), Instrumental and more Military Band records came next up to approximately 6400, then there is a gap until approximately 6900 when the recordings devoted to 'Songs' commenced. We know that Ludgate had a catalogue of 500 records in 1924, (does anyone have a copy?) We know they continued issuing records for some years after. I doubt very much that they used all the catalogue numbers. Either way the number I have documented over the years must represent only a small fraction of the total issued and I will be grateful for any help the readers can offer,

Yours sincerely,

Arthur Badrock, Norwich

Dear Editor,

I was delighted to read the letter from George Frow concerning Edith Lorand. In recent years it has become possible to acquire transfers on LP or CD of recordings by the other two stalwarts of the pre-war Parlophone catalogue, Dajos Bela and the Orchestra Mascotte but Lorand has for some unaccountable reason been neglected. I have been able to give a good home to a number of 78s by Lorand and her Orchestra and, transferred to domestic tape these sound very well but modern, commercial transfers would be most welcome. I know little of her history except that her Hungarian-Jewish origins probably cut short her recording career in Germany after 1933,

Yours sincerely,

Alan Sheppard, Lewes

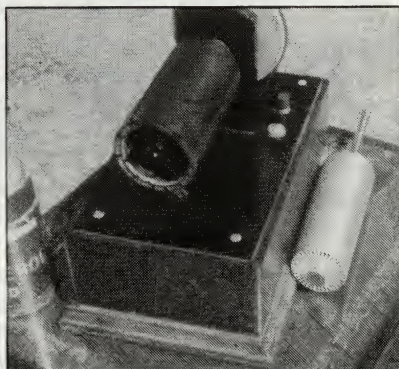


Dear Editor,

Some time ago I made a 'set-up' for electrically reproducing cylinders, using a series connected Shure cartridge - but the reproduction was somewhat marred by a 125 cycle rumble and a 'wow' on a few cylinders due to their warped state. I curved the rumble by incorporating a graphic equaliser but the warped cylinders were still a problem. I thought of running the cylinder on rollers with a spring-loaded mandrel to keep the cylinder true to the stylus . . . too complicated for me! Then, I hit on the idea of a spider (skeleton) mandrel where the cylinder could be tried in several positions to get it to run true and it works well. The machine in the photo has a brass mandrel with three blades. Inside the box is a Garrard motor, suitably geared down to give 160 rpm.

I have also made two further machines for friends - if other members are interested I can supply dimensions etc.

My friend's machines have pick-up arms clipped to the cases; I use the same pick-up



from my disc turntable. I don't intend to build any more of these machines but felt I should share the idea.

Yours sincerely,

P. B. H. Roberts, Shrewsbury

## Reports

### **CLPGS Midlands Group bi-monthly meeting, 21st July 1991, Birmingham.**

A sub-committee of four was elected to plan our fourth exhibition of talking machines at the Dudley Show to be held at Himley Hall on 3/4 August. Discussion was also held concerning our proposed record fayre planned for the Autumn.

The next meeting will be on Sunday 21st September, when our Chairman, Mr. Eddie Dunn will give a talk entitled "Hillandale". The second half of the evening was devoted to (yet another) Musical Quiz presented by members Wal Fowler and Geoff Howl. This followed the usual pattern where the audience has to try to identify bands, artists, names of operas etc. from snatches of 78s. This is a popular evening which promotes lively comments (good and bad) as the records are played.

Geoff Howl

### **CLPGS Midlands Group 4th Exhibition at the Dudley Show, 3/4 August 1991**

Once again we mounted an exhibition of talking machines in the old Board Room at Himley Hall, and we displayed a comprehensive range from a "Dog Model" to a Dansette electric player, in all approximately 50 machines, plus associated models and posters etc. We introduced two special themes this time namely:-

- 1) To commemorate 60 years since Edison's death, part of the exhibition was devoted to his products (mainly phonographic or gramophone, but including 4 electric light bulbs).
- 2) To mark the 75th anniversary of the Somme, a small area featured W. W. I. items - Decca "Trench" Portable, appropriate 78s and sheet music, not to mention steel helmets and gas masks. Fortunately the room we used was ideal; with 6 or 7 members as stewards we were able to demonstrate many machines to the public.

Geoff Howl

# From the Rostrum

**Christies, South Kensington**

**July 25th, 1991**

There is a natural assumption in the popular mind that now is not a good time to be selling anything. Certainly, some subjects have taken a pasting, but these are the sort in which high prices were fuelled by investors in the late 1980s – Impressionist pictures and exotic sports cars are outstanding examples. Markets such as ours, however, have depended all along on the 'serious' collector rather than the investor, and this July sale confirmed that buyers in this class are not on their uppers yet.

Top price was £2,420 (including premium), for a Trade-mark Gramophone. It was a 'real' dog model, the 1898 model with flat-spring brake and Gramophone Company label, printed before the company became 'Ltd.' in 1899. Furthermore, having been kept in its leather carrying case, it was in excellent condition. Only the leather elbow was missing (replaced by a home-made affair), and the machine was, overall, the best example I can recall seeing at auction since the early 1970s.

Of slightly later date (1903–4) and much rarer, was a Monarch. One of the first taper tone-arm models (with back-bracket mounted off-centre to hide holes drilled for a travelling-arm support bracket), rare because the cabinet design changed about 1905 to the familiar 'cockleshell'. At £770, this was not cheap, but nor was it expensive when its rarity is compared to the £1000-plus for common wood-horned Gramophones.

Edison Triumphs appear at auction less than their modest value might suggest. Two appeared in this sale, both 'Amberolised' Model Bs, at £440 and £460. The first had both 'C' and 'H' repros, the latter only an 'H' but a very decayed large brass horn and a clutch of cylinders perhaps contributed to the higher price. There was also a Spring motor in excellent condition apart from the absence of its distinctive lid and it did have its original funnel-like horn with original internal yellow paintwork and a box of brown wax cylinders. £660 bought this, but £380 was not enough for a drip-pan Gem (a variety which has never had collectors digging deep in their pockets). Another failure was an Opera; beautifully re-cased in oak, with an oak music Master horn that had once been suspended from a crane, this was a suspect restoration job – but originality is what collectors want, and the bidding stopped at £1,400. No problems though with good, clean *original* machines: an EMG Mark IX reached the level reserved not so long ago for the best of its larger brothers, at £2,090, and a black HMV 97 cost someone £132. For those who faint at the sight of HMV model numbers, this is the small, cheap versions of the 102 portable. Two Edison Standards were £330 and £352 (both with 17 1/2 % VAT on top of that) and a tired but sound wood-horned Apollo gramophone changed hands at £462, after failing at £300 in April. The two EMG soundboxes which no-one wanted in that sale both sold now, one (early, and out of place on most surviving 'small' EMGs like the Mark IX) at £77 and the other, the more familiar plated model of the 1930s, at £154. Size for size, the bargain of the sale was a magnificently vulgar Algramophone, pretending to be a Louis XV sideboard, if there ever was such a thing. Why on earth had someone gone to the considerable trouble of removing its small internal horn? I don't know, but this Savile Row cabinet cost £528: not bad for a cabinet gramophone which isn't re-entrant, but this was some cabinet!

**Christopher Proudfoot**



### Additions to the Booklist

**B202 - "Old Gramophones"** by Benet Bergonzi (Shire Publications, £2.40 p&p) as reviewed herein recently by G. Frow.

**B203 - "Fascinating Rhythm"** by Peter Cliffe (Egon Publishing, £16.95 p&p) as reviewed, with extract, in Hillandale News.

**B204 - "The Complete Regal Catalogue 1914 to 1932"** by Arthur Badrock & Frank Andrews (£18.00)

**B205 - CLPGS Cirencester Exhibition Guide** A catalogue of machines with brief descriptions with a brief history of the talking machine industry from 1877 to present day. Many illustrations. (£4.50)

**B206 - "Recollections of Thomas A. Edison"** by A. F. Wagner. Published in conjunction with Symposium Records. See review in this issue. (£4.50)

**M8 - CLPGS tie, new design in dark red or blue with gold woven logo.** (£4.80)

**M9 - CLPGS Window Sticker, 100 mm square, showing trademark gramophone (without dog) in black and gold on white background** (2 for £1.20)

[Overseas orders - please add 10% for p&p]

Available from:

D. R. Roberts, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Surrey

## Forthcoming London and regional Meetings

### London Meetings

Meetings held at The National Sound Archive, Kensington, on the third Thursday evening of the month promptly at 7.00, (unless otherwise noted):

**THURSDAY October 17th** - Chairman's Evening, P. Martland - "Two Tenors"

**Thursday November 21st** - "On My Lighter Side", by George Woolford

**Thursday December 19th** - "The Edison Syncopators", by Paul Collette

### Midlands Group

Meetings at Carr Lane Methodist Centre  
Birmingham

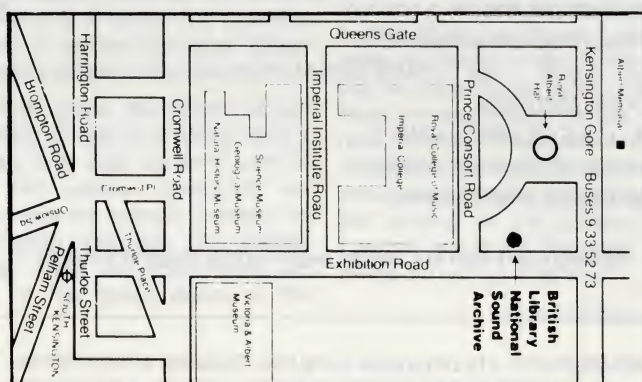
**Nov 16th** - TBA

### Clockwork Music Group

Meetings in the Activities Room, Science Museum, Blandford St., Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Saturdays, 2pm to 4.15pm

**December 14th** - "A Thrill in The Dark", our annual Magic Lantern show

by D. Greenacre.



# Recorded Vocal Art Society

President: VIVIAN LIFF

Vice-President: PAT GORDON

The Recorded Vocal Art Society was formed in 1953 to  
encourage the enjoyment of Opera and Song

*Bloomsbury Institute*  
*Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church*  
*235 Shaftesbury Avenue*

Junction New Oxford Street - Almost opposite Oasis Swimming Pool  
Nearest Tube - Tottenham Court Road or Holborn

## Programme 1991/92

### 1991

Sept 10	ALICE'S DILEMMA: In defence of the 78	John Steane
Sept 24	SO YOU CALL YOURSELF A COLLECTOR?	Larry Lustig
Oct 8	HAIL CALEDONIA: Singers of Scotland	Eileen Miller
Oct 22	SINGERS I HAVE WORKED WITH	Vilem Tausky
Nov 12	THE FORCES OF FATE	John T. Hughes
Nov 26	RECOLLECTIONS OF SINGERS	Alfred Onda
Dec 10	WELL WORTH HEARING	Richard Copeman

### 1992

Jan 14	FORUM ON SINGERS	Chaired by Tom Peel
Jan 28	FROM THE LIBRARY SHELVES	Derek Lewis
Feb 11	STAY AT HOMES	Alan Blyth
Feb 25	CANADIAN SINGERS	Ronald Taylor
Mar 10	TALES OF THE RECORD BUSINESS	Colin Butler and Sally Rettig
Mar 24	JOY AND THANKSGIVING	Richard Nicholson
April 14	SELDOM HEARD	Allan Palmer
April 28	PUNTO BLÅST MAGNIFIQUE	Paul Lewis
May 12	(a) A G. M. (b) COMMEMORATIONS	Aubrey Levey
May 26	ODDS AND ENDS	Vivian Liff
June 9	A LITTLE OF WHAT I FANCY	Jean Harrison
June 23	VOICE VERSUS TECHNIQUE	Alan Bilgora
July 14	MEMBERS' PROGRAMME	

**All Meetings begin at 7.00p.m. and normally close at 9.00p.m.**

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MEMBERSHIP: £12.00 payable to the Hon. Treasurer at the meetings

ATTENDANCE FEE per meeting: MEMBERS 50p (inc. coffee) VISITORS £2.00 (inc. coffee)

Hon Secretary—Tom Peel. [REDACTED] Essex. Telephone [REDACTED]



# Book Reviews

**"Recollections of Thomas A. Edison" by  
A. F. Wagner (CLPGS & Symposium  
Records, London, 1991, £4.50)**

The title is a misnomer by the fact that what we have here are the recollections of The National Phonograph Company, Ltd., of England and its successor Thomas A. Edison, Ltd. by A. F. Wagner who was appointed the manager of the business in December 1913, who joined the London business in January 1904 when James D. White was the manager.

Mr. Wagner did not put his "Recollections" to paper until 1951 and, as he himself says, "My recollections may not be complete nor accurate" he also admitting that he had a fading memory for those far-off days.

It will therefore be apparent that the contents are often suspect as to accuracy for any ardent researcher but, having said that, this is a most interesting book which gives an insight into the way the Edison business in England was carried on, with fascinating details about policies, trading, associates in other companies with whom the Edison business had relations, material which is not otherwise obtainable in Britain and to which I had no access in writing my opus "Edison Phonograph - The British Connection".

The recollections cover the period January 1904 to the end of the First World War in November 1918 and deal not only with the phonograph and cylinder production and sales, but also with the storage batteries, the Ediphone dictating machines, the Kinetophones, Edison silent and sound films, and the founding of The British Board of Film Censors.

Mr. Wagner was a British ex-serviceman having served with the army until the end of the Boer War in South Africa in 1902 and joined the Edison phonograph business in London knowing nothing at all about the industry whatsoever, consequently his own development as an Edison man and the advance of the Edison business in Britain went hand in hand and no one was more suited to give an account of the business than he. By the time he was appointed Manager, after having held other positions, the phonograph and records business had been withdrawn from the British company's control and dealers were once more dealing directly with West Orange. The storage batteries and the Ediphones passed to others in London and Wagner was left managing the Edison film business, and a fair proportion of his "Recollections" are devoted to that side of the business about which he reveals many facts, one of which is why the proposed building in Soho Square, mentioned in my book, was never occupied. Wagner became a member of the British Board of Film Censors when it was formed and he also became a Director of Universal Copyrights, Ltd. in 1914. The book is eminently readable and entertaining and follows somewhat in the footsteps of Fred Gaisberg's "The Music Goes Around", although artists are not much mentioned. Mr. Wagner appears not to have kept a diary, which would have assisted him no end in compiling his account had he done so. He had no knowledge of the fact that Edison Recording Rooms had first been established in The Grays Inn Road, London, E. C. for when he joined, or soon after, he states that the recording rooms were in the Clerkenwell Road building where he was employed, the new European Headquarters transferred from Antwerp. I recommend this book for its high entertainment value and the insight it gives in the running of the Edison enterprises in London, and at the Willesden factory, where things did not go at all well.

Frank Andrews

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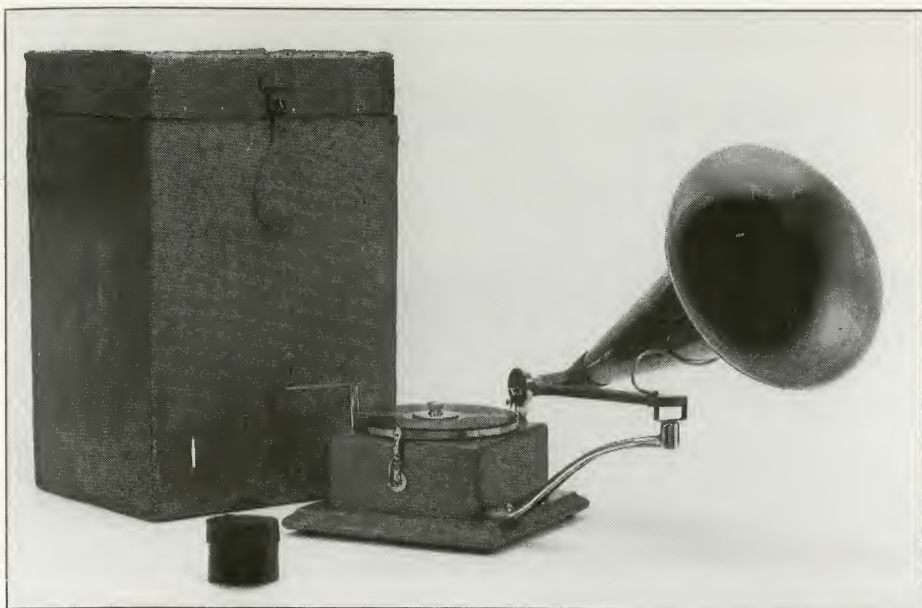
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